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VIETNAM COURIER

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JUL 1968
UNIV. OF MICHIGAN

South Viet Nam MILITARY OPERATIONS

- **P.L.A.F. Keep Control of Great Part of Cholon and Many Strategic Points North of Saigon and Attacks Other Town Quarters: 22 Tanks and Armoured Cars Destroyed** *(May 31)* **in Saigon.**
- **Near Bien Hoa, 900 G.I.s Put Out of Action, 42 Armoured Cars and Tanks, 8 Heavy Mortars Destroyed, 2 Choppers Damaged** *(May 25, 26 and 27).*
- **Many U.S. Bases Near Hue Stormed** *(May 17-20)*: **1,500 G.I.s Killed or Wounded, 178 Aircraft, 150 Vehicles and 25 Cannons Destroyed.**

Complete Breakdown of Destruction of U.S. Riverine Task Forces on Mekong River (May 26 and 27):

38 Vessels Sunk or Burnt, 1,500 G.I.s Killed or Wounded.

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SPECIAL ADVISOR LE DUC THO ARRIVES IN PARIS

Special Advisor Le Duc Tho (first row, in dark dress) leaving for Paris. On his left: Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh

LE DUC THO, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, special adviser to Minister XUAN THUY, representative of the D.R.V.N. Government at the official conversations in Paris with the U.S. government's representative arrived on June 3 at the French capital.

At Bretigny airport, Le Duc Tho declared to newsmen:

"It is with pleasure that I come to Paris for the second time. First allow me to send my warm greetings to the Paris and the French people, staunch friends of the Vietnamese people, as well as to political and diplomatic personalities here present. I am happy to convey to our compatriots living in France the most affectionate feelings of President Ho Chi Minh and of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

"In the name of the Government of the D.R.V.N. I once again heartily thank the French Government for its help in organizing the current official talks between our representative and that of the U.S. Government.

These talks have been held for more than twenty days, but the American side still refuses, by dilatory means, to unconditionally end the bombing and all other acts of war against the D.R.V.N., thus impeding the progress of the talks. Opinion in the world and the U.S. has energetically condemned the obstinacy of the American side and fully supported the just position of the D.R.V.N. I am convinced that should the American side relinquish its obdurate attitude, conversations on other problems of interest to both sides would begin forthwith, as stated by our Government in its May 3, 1968 statement."

See page 2: Short biography of Le Duc Tho.

North Viet Nam

UP TO JUNE 8, 1968

2,963 U.S. Planes Were Downed

More Questions for Mr. Harriman

MR. Harriman doesn't like history to be evoked. But what could one do about it? No people were born yesterday and politicians know better than anyone else that nowhere did men and governments build on virgin lands.

Even less so in Viet Nam, don't you think, Mr. Harriman?

You've certainly made a careful study of the dossier, and you know perfectly well that when General Taylor wrote in his book "Responsibility and Response" that Viet Nam never had a chance to become a nation, his untruth can only be ascribed to a militaryman's ignorance. But you, you know very well that Viet Nam had existed as a nation long before the American republic was born.

I won't go as far back as the Stone or Bronze Age, which had witnessed in our country an already brilliant civilization; allow me to remind Mr. Taylor however that as early as the 10th century, Viet Nam had formed an independent state and that her whole history was marked by a vigorous and stubborn struggle to safeguard her independence.

Who doesn't know the power of the Mongolian Empire built in the 13th century by Gengis Khan and his successors? Master of a great part of Asia and Europe, Kublai Khan on three occasions — in 1257, 1284 and 1287 — sent powerful armies to conquer Viet Nam, and failed each time.

Do you know how a small country like Viet Nam was able to oppose a victorious resistance to the greatest military empire of that time? Before the aggressors came, the Tran king had convened — a fact without precedent in the history of monarchies — an extraordinary assembly of village elders to seek their advice. Should the country fight or submit? From thousands of chests, one single answer: "Fight!" The whole country was put on a war footing, which was made easier by the traditional institution of peasant-soldiers. For the Vietnamese monarchy, in anticipation of foreign aggressions, had instituted for the peasants a military service by periodical rotation.

(*Continued page 2*)

AMERICAN BAD FAITH HAMPERS PARIS TALKS

THE Paris official talks between the D.R.V.N. and the U.S. have been lasting nearly one month. Public opinion holds they have not made any progress.

At the seven sessions already held, Mr. Harriman, U.S. representative, resorted to all imperialist diplomatic tricks to try to obtain what half a million GIs had been unable to achieve on the battlefield, that is a victory over the Vietnamese people.

He cynically made black white. It is the U.S. that has been for fourteen years flouting the Geneva agreements and striving to turn South Viet Nam into a U.S. new-type colony and military base, but Mr. Harriman said that the U.S. was for a serious implementation of the Geneva Agreements and supported an independent and democratic South Viet Nam. It is the U.S. that has brazenly sabotaged the status of the demilitarized zone but Mr. Harriman gave us the assurance that the U.S. abode by it. It is the U.S. that has violated the Geneva agreements on Laos and the neutrality of Cambodia. Mr. Harriman claimed that the U.S. respected the national rights of these countries.

In all his speeches, Mr. Harriman has not ceased slandering the D.R.V.N. which, he maintained, has invaded South Viet Nam. On the strength of this perfidious allegation he demanded "reciprocity" and "mutual de-escalation" from the D.R.V.N. Then, realizing that neither slanders nor distortion of historical facts could deceive public opinion, he tried to blur the line between the just position of the D.R.V.N. and the unjust stand of the U.S. by asserting that they had many points in common.

*

Minister Xuan Thuy, representative of the D.R.V.N., had little trouble to show U.S. bad faith in the Paris talks. With ready evidence, he re-established the truth on various aspects of the Vietnamese problems while disposing one by one of the allegations of the American side.

Mr. Xuan Thuy recalled the process of U.S. implementation of its neo-colonialist policy in South Viet Nam: sabotage of the Geneva agreements, utilization of the Saigon puppet administration to repress former resistance members and the South Viet Nam people, the "special war", then "local war" in South Viet Nam, escalation of destructive air attacks started in August 1964 against the D.R.V.N. and savage crimes against the entire Vietnamese people.

He gave concrete proofs of systematic violations by the U.S. aggressors of the status of the demilitarized zone. He categorically rejected the American proposal to put to discussion the demilitarized zone question. The real issue to consider is U.S. aggression against Viet Nam. U.S. violation and sabotage of the 1954 Geneva agreements on Viet Nam, he said.

Mr. Xuan Thuy laid bare the hypocrisy of the American side on the Cambodian and Lao problems. He stressed that, just at the moment when Mr. Harriman referred to U.S. respect of the sovereignty and neutrality of these countries, the Cambodian Royal Government and the Neo Lao Hakisat protested against the U.S. aggressive acts against their own countries. He supported the position of the Royal Government of Cambodia and that of the Neo Lao Hakisat against the inclusions of the problems of Cambodia and Laos in the bilateral talks between the D.R.V.N. and the U.S., which move would be a challenge to international law.

Minister Xuan Thuy laid special emphasis in his speeches on the problem of U.S. bombing of the D.R.V.N. He said that the U.S. had not attained any objective by unleashing, without any plausible reason, this abominable war of destruction against an independent and sovereign country. On the contrary, it has been universally condemned though having lost to date well nigh 3,000 up to date planes in North Viet Nam and great numbers of best pilots. It is the setbacks of the U.S. in North as well as South Viet Nam and its isolation in the world that partially explain Johnson's decision on March 31 last to "limit" the bombings of North Viet Nam. But what the peoples in Viet Nam and in the world demand is unconditional cessation of U.S. bombings and other war acts against the whole territory of the D.R.V.N. No "reciprocity", no ransom is to be allowed to U.S. crimes.

Mr. Xuan Thuy recalled that the purpose of the official talks, held in Paris on the initiative of the D.R.V.N., was precisely to ascertain the unconditional cessation of U.S. bombing and other war acts against the D.R.V.N., then to discuss other problems of interest to both parties.

At all the 7 sessions, Mr. Harriman tried to dodge that primordial question of unconditional cessation of bombing and other war acts against North Viet Nam. He and his government must be held responsible for the slow progress of the Paris talks.

At the 7th session, Mr. Xuan Thuy put to Mr. Harriman this question: "Why did the U.S. government representative state that the U.S. must wait for an appropriate time and circumstances to end the bombing? Why don't they end them right now?"

Mr. Harriman could not give any answer.

WESTERN agencies revealed that is was the U.S. government's intention to drag on the Paris talks in order to play for time and "improve" its position in South Viet Nam.

The events in South Viet Nam show that the position of the U.S. has grown from bad to worse while Mr. Harriman's shuffling and slandering in Paris only throw a strong light on U.S. bad faith.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF LE DUC THO

LE DUC THO was born on October 14, 1910 in Nam Ha province.

Animated by an ardent patriotism and deep hatred for the imperialists and feudalists, he took part in revolutionary activities as early as 1928. In 1929, he joined in the movement for the founding of the Indo-Chinese Communist Party and has been working in its ranks up to now.

During 40 years of unremitting revolutionary activities he was arrested twice by the imperialists and sentenced to hard labour.

Freed in late 1944, he was elected to the Central Committee of the Indo-Chinese Communist Party and subsequently to the Standing Bureau of the Party Central Committee.

In the resistance war against the French colonialists, he was in charge of the Central Committee's Bureau for South Viet Nam. He was one of the principal leaders of the resistance in South Viet Nam.

Since 1955, he has been member of the Political Bureau and a Secretary of the Viet Nam Workers, Party Central Committee.

More Questions...

(Continued from page 1)

The Mongols easily captured the capital, which had been evacuated by the king and the administration, but the people everywhere refused to give them supplies, attacked their posts, convoys and patrols, decimated their troops. Meanwhile the Vietnamese regular army carefully prepared its counter-offensive, made a judicious choice of times and places, and fought a series of victorious and decisive battles. The Mongolian troops suffered a total defeat. Their commander-in-chief, Kublai's son, succeeded in saving his hide only through a precipitate flight, hidden in a brass drum.

Perhaps you will find this historical analogy irrelevant, but it may be useful to recall that the Mongols, while getting ready for armed aggression, had on several occasions tried to negotiate the Vietnamese kings' surrender, by threatening to destroy the country in case of resistance, and that the Mongolian troops had brought along in their band wagons a string of Vietnamese traitors and set up a puppet government which nobody recognised.

YOU may not be convinced by that remote past? Let us make a survey of contemporary history. In 1858, the colonialists launched their first operations of conquest against Viet Nam. At that time, our country no longer had the luck of being headed by patriotic and energetic kings as in the 13th century; kings and mandarins, more concerned about keeping their privileges than defending the nation, and frightened by modern weapons, were inclined to capitulate. But the people had remained the same: firmly attached to land and country, resolved to stand up to the aggressor.

The French historian Pallu de la Barrière, an eye-witness, had this to say: "The centre of resistance was everywhere... It would be more accurate to consider each peasant busy tying a sheaf of rice as a centre of resistance." ("History of the 1861 Cochinchina Expedition").

French lieutenant Prudhomme reported:

"There was no sadder, more monotonous, more tiresome spectacle than the sight of the French moving along on land and water. One of the adversaries was constantly in sight, the other concealed himself. Our blows only hit a vacuum. There was not a single Annamite who did not look upon the native soldiers and village headmen who had given us their pledges as parricides." (Reminiscences of the 1861-62 Cochinchina Expedition).

Don't these facts remind you of things happening just now?

American officers have been collecting documents on Dien Bien Phu, on the war of resistance waged by the Vietnamese people against the French colonialists from 1945 to 1954. I would recommend that they go as far back as the beginning of French conquest: they will see that for more than a century, up to now, the Vietnamese people have never left off their struggle: that the nation's banner has been successively held aloft by various personalities and social strata; that the national movement reached a climax in 1945 with that tidal wave: the August Revolution.

Many Western historians, who were not on the spot, have given you a false idea of these days in August 1945, recording only superficial events: the surrender of the Japanese, the entry of British and Chiang Kai-shek troops in Indochina, the taking of power by the Viet Minh. But they didn't know that for years, the Viet Minh had mobilised millions of people in a persevering struggle, both political and military, against the Japanese fascists and the French colonialists. They forgot — either voluntarily or through ignorance — that tremendous upsurge which carried away millions of people in August 1945 and pushed them to overthrow, everywhere, from North to South, in Hanoi, Saigon, Hue, and in the towns and boroughs of Viet Nam — the organs of the pro-Japanese administration to set up the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

It is this *great national and popular movement*, in a Viet Nam that is one and indivisible, which brought the D.R.V.N. Government to power. It is this movement which allowed the latter to resist the French colonialists' armed aggression. It is again this movement which, as you know, has checked Johnson's ambitions. The peasant who fought against the Mongols, then in 1861 against the French, the combatant of the 13th century battles and that of Dien Bien Phu, all spring from the same stock. The fighter of Dien Bien Phu, the soldier who defeated the French troops on Central Highlands, and the guerilla of Ca Mau in the extreme South, are — you certainly know it, Mr. Harriman — of the same nation. You also know that the A.A. gunner of Hanoi or Haiphong, so feared by American pilots, and the guerilla of Da Nang or Saigon, who is depleting American expeditionary troops, belong to the same people.

NGUYEN KHAC VIEN

THE NORTH—GREAT REAR BASE OF THE SOUTH

D.R.V.N. EDUCATION IN THREE YEARS OF RESISTANCE TO U.S. AGGRESSION

Professor **NGUYEN VAN HUYEN**
Minister of Education

IN their war of destruction against North Viet Nam the U.S. aggressors have been deliberately striking at the educational establishments, at the young generations, the future builders of our country. Nearly 700 schools from the first to third degree, including infant classes and colleges, general schools and supplementary education schools, have been raided, many of them completely destroyed or heavily damaged. These attacks have taken a toll of 57 pupils in Huong Phuc (Ha Tinh province), of 30 pupils and a woman teacher in Thuy Dan (Thai Binh province) and of numerous others at Ha Phu (Thanh Hoa province), Y Yen (Nam Ha province)... But never before has education in our country known such an extensive and rapid development as today.

SOME FIGURES

IN general education, we have so far achieved compulsory primary education for 99% of the primary school-age children. There are enough 5th form-first grade of the elementary education (from the 5th to 7th form) for approximately 80% of the children having finished primary education while secondary education is also expanding quickly. If in the 1964-1965 school year when the American war of destruction began, North Viet Nam had 9,205 schools and 2,673,994 students and pupils, in 1965-1966 the figures were respectively 10,264 and 2,934,890. In 1967-1968, in spite of the increasing fierceness of U.S. air raids, the 11,545 general education schools of all degrees with 3,682,000 pupils continued to function regularly. Compared with the pre-war period this is an increase of 24% for schools and 27% for pupils. A quarter of century ago, 95% of our people were illiterate. Today every village has its own first degree (primary) school, nearly four-fifths of the villages have second degree (elementary) schools and all districts have third degree (secondary) schools. In the mountain regions, the number of second and third degree schools has increased by approximately 30 times over the total number of schools of the same degrees throughout Viet Nam in colonial days.

The picture of our educational progress will not be complete if we forget to mention 1,200,000 children who are receiving ever better care in the infant or preschool classes and about the same number of adults who are attending full-time or spare time complementary education classes, 38% of them of the second degree.

To supply enough teachers for growing general education, the system of teachers' schools has been unceasingly broadened to comprise now 138 schools at the central as well as local level, with more than 50,000 students. Remarkably enough, in the midst of the resistance to U.S. aggression we have opened three normal colleges one in the autonomous zone of Viet Bac in the 1966-67 academic year for the training of teachers from ethnical minorities for the third degree schools in the mountain regions; and two in Hanoi in the 1967-1968 academic year.

To train talents for future construction of the country we attach great importance to discovering and fostering gifted students, enlarging special mathematical and foreign language classes.

In socialist North Viet Nam at present one out of every three inhabitants is attending school. In Cam Binh village, Ha Tinh province, where the fighting against the U.S. war of destruction is at its fiercest, or Mu Ca, an out-of-the-way village in the border province of Lao Cai, one in two inhabitants receives some sort of schooling.

FORMATION OF NEW MEN

ALONG with expanding education we pay great attention to improving the training of the new-type man by many efficient means suitable to the war time conditions such as: promoting political and ideological work, fostering revolutionary heroism among the teachers and students, pushing ahead the "teach well and learn well" emulation movement, stepping up the training and fostering of teachers of all branches and at all levels, reinforcing the material bases of the schools, speeding up research on educational reforms with a view to defining the objectives for the immediate and long-term development of education. The emulation movement to build vanguard schools has borne its fruits. From the example of the standard-bearer Bac Ly second degree school in Nam Ha province we have drawn six lessons on how to teach well and learn well. So far 2,500 schools have been commended as vanguard schools.

Two million North Vietnamese children have distinguished themselves in the carrying out of the "Five Teachings of Uncle Ho Chi Minh" and received the title of "Uncle Ho's Good Nephews or Nieces". Among them 1,138 were A/1 pupils in all subjects and were given prizes by President Ho. Tens of thousands of teachers have been recognized advanced or model teachers. The best among them have received certificates of merits signed by President Ho Chi Minh himself.

The collective character of the emulation movement in education has also found an expression in the increasing number of Socialist Labour teams which achieve the norms of "good teaching, close unity and all-round progress". The number of such teams rose from 272 in the year 1964-65 to 380 in 1965-66 and to 644 in 1966-67.

Our Party and Government, having specifically defined the role of the teachers, have on the one hand guided with a steady hand the normal schools in reorientating the training towards linking more closely education to the realities in production and the fighting and on the other hand, paid special attention to improving the teachers' political, cultural and professional standard. The policies and regulations concerning teachers have also been amended continually. Last year the Council of Ministers decided to transfer all the teachers of people-provided second degree schools on to the government payroll. This year it has extended the same benefit to all non-governmental teachers of the first degree schools. This was a major effort, considering the present war conditions. It also spells out the deep concern of our Party and State headed by esteemed President Ho Chi Minh for education.

TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY WAR

AS far as school equipment is concerned, the local Party and state organisations have made commendable efforts to continually increase it. At the same time the schools have themselves done their utmost in self-sufficiency in equipment. In such provinces as Hai Hung, Ha Bac and Ha Tay, conferences have been held to discuss the ways and means to provide schools with better equipment and more adequate measures to promote the production, maintenance and use of school equipment in a way suitable to war-time conditions. Quang Ninh province has even opened a "fair" on school articles made by the teachers and pupils in the province.

We are well aware that in the present conditions the safety of teachers and pupils must be carefully seen to. Thanks to effective civil defence including the evacuation of the schools to safer places, in spite of the U.S. deliberate attacks on our educational establishments, we have kept down the casualties to the minimum. All the schools have been operating normally with an increasing pupil body and a regular full curriculum. This is also a graphic demonstration of the staunch will of an ethnic people to take their destiny into their own hands, of their self-confidence and their firm belief in final victory.

THESE successes which spring from the sound policy of our Party and government and the gigantic efforts made by our teachers, pupils and people, are also partly due to the sympathy, and moral and material support of progressive teachers, pupils and people in the world, chiefly of those from the brother socialist countries. Such gifts as: exercise-books, books and other school things have been no small incentives to our teachers and pupils to "teach well and learn well".

The aforesaid achievements are only the first fruits of the season in comparison with the requirements of the revolution. Much remains to be done. We shall strive untiringly for an more extensive advance of socialist education in Viet Nam. We have every reason to believe that we shall succeed in training for the Fatherland new generations of men and women fully developed and qualified to carry on the resistance to U.S. aggression while continuing socialist construction.

CAM BINH Ten Times More Paddy

One Hundred Times More Schoolchildren

CAM BINH, a village in Ha Tinh province with little more than 3,000 population, remembers with indignation the famine in early 1945 — a product of the colonial and feudal regime — which took a toll of 354 lives. This was due to the fact that its land was barren and yielded only from 300 to 400 kgs of paddy per hectare per year. Worse still, a few local landlords grabbed 70 per cent of this land.

The August 1945 revolution gave land to the peasants there and provided agricultural co-operatives with facilities to harness nature. From year to year, with the changed layout of ricefields and introduction of new farming techniques, paddy yield has been constantly on the rise and reaches at present 4.8 tons per hectare per year, despite American air raids numbering over 50 for the last three years. Sweet potatoes have recorded a fourfold increase.

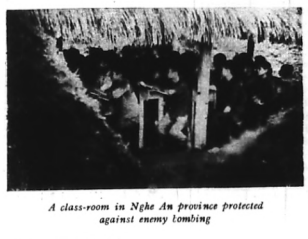
After rice comes education. Prior to the August 1945 revolution, there were at Cam Binh only 17 people—all of them belonging to well-off families—who knew how to read and write. In 1947, illiteracy was wiped out there and at present 1,800 children attend school, a figure one hundred times higher than under the old regime.

The Cam Binh people ascribe these successes to the revolution and the Viet Nam Workers' Party. In addition to general education establishments built for young people, the Viet Nam Workers' Party local organization has paid great attention to the adults' complementary education. It has given a strong fillip to the formation and fostering of cadres, to raising the political consciousness of co-op members and applying new farming techniques.

Over the last few years, the U.S. war of destruction has made it necessary to disperse schools; the inhabitants have taken upon themselves to providing new houses. Thus 23 rooms have been built together with a protection system such as embankment, communication trenches, totalling 21,000 metres. Better still, the villagers have collected up to now 28,000 dong (Vietnamese currency) for the eventual building of brick school buildings after the re-establishment of peace. To serve the children, an old man has successfully devised after five tests a kind of lamp which will allow children to study at night in complete blackout. A movement was launched among co-operatives and pupils' parents to rear more poultry and grow more fruit trees for the welfare of children.

The teachers are carefully looked after by the rural authorities and population. They are lodged in families which do their best to help them in their daily life. The co-operatives give them all facilities to put into practice the principle of "linking the school to life". The cultural, professional and political training on these teachers is taken up by the Viet Nam Workers' Party local branch.

Such is, in a nutshell, the secret of the success obtained by Cam Binh in production and education.



A class-room in Nghe An province protected against enemy bombing

U.S. STRENGTH OBVIOUSLY ON THE DOWNGRADE

by CHIEN BINH

Editor's note: *The military commentator of the* **Quan Doi Nhan Dan** *(People's Army)* **Chien Binh** *wrote in its May 28 issue an analysis of the situation in South Viet Nam following the widespread attacks by people's forces in May 1968.*

The article contains two parts:

1. U.S. strength obviously on the downgrade.

2. Our strength unquestionably on the rise.

We print in this issue the translation of the first part:

1. THE AMERICANS UNABLE TO CHECK SOUTHERN PEOPLE AND ARMED FORCES' ATTACKS IN SPITE OF ALL PRECAUTIONS AND PREPARATIONS

FOLLOWING the early spring widespread attacks and uprisings, the cities and towns of the South have in fact become a new battlefield where continuous and fierce actions are undertaken, which directly threaten and upset all the military and political plans of the American aggressors and the clique of traitors.

The Americans and their puppets had been trying by every means to push the war away from the cities and towns, Saigon in particular. They desperately mounted military operations around the cities, especially Saigon, and in the Tri-Thien-Hue* region. They withdrew troops from many places and set up thick defences around the cities, Saigon in particular. They strove to "restore security in the cities" by all sorts of terror measures: imposing a curfew and proclaiming a state of emergency, carrying out man-hunts, arrests, wanton massacres, etc. But all their efforts proved futile. Although they said they were expecting new attacks, they have been unable to check renewed onslaughts, on an even larger scale than the first time, by the Liberation troops on Saigon-Cholon. Their new strategic plan aimed at strengthening the defences of the cities, and especially Saigon, has gone bankrupt; their battle array, already thrown into confusion, has been disrupted even more.

Such is the outstanding feature of the war situation during the past three months. It is also the clearest evidence of American decline in strength and potential.

2. THE AMERICANS ARE RUNNING SHORT OF BOTH OCCUPATION AND MOBILE TROOPS

SUSTAINING hard blows in the cities, the Americans and their puppets have been forced to abandon many important positions. They have evacuated large rural areas and withdrawn their troops to the cities. They have not enough troops either to occupy or re-occupy many vital positions.

American mobile reserves, already inadequate in numbers, are being thrown about haphazardly, withdrawn from key areas for urgent rescue operations, and troops of one kind are combined with others into odd mixtures. Such "elite" mobile units as the *Americal* division, the *Big Red One*... are pinned down, unable to move as required. Most miserable is the fate of the Air Cavalry Division: cut up into small units, it has been rushed around from one place to another, from the Central Highlands to Highway 9, and the coastal regions of Trung Bo, for unsuccessful rescue operations which took from it heavy tolls. One aspect of the present serious American decline in strength is the destruction of U.S. mobile forces by big chunks.

And so, although American troop strength is still considerable, their fighting spirit has clearly sunk. The half a million American troops are on the horns of this agonising dilemma: the necessity of concentrating and that of dispersing them. This "gigantic" army has proved more and more impotent in its function as the mainstay of the neo-colonial limited war of aggression. It has failed to "break the back of the Viet-Cong": on the contrary it has been unsuccessfully trying to ward off jaw-smashing jabs by its adversary. Not only has it failed to proffer any "shield" to the puppet army, it has been unable to protect even itself.

The American expeditionary troops are fighting not to win "complete victory" as they had boasted, but merely in the hope of "not losing the war."

3. IN SPITE OF FRANTIC EFFORTS, THE AMERICANS ARE MORE AND MORE ON THE DEFENSIVE

FOLLOWING their shameful failures in the 1966-1967 dry season counter-offensive, the Americans had to give up their strategy of counter-offensives. Mired down in a state of passivity, they had to take urgent measures to strengthen the defence of the cities, military bases and communication junctions, and pour sizable forces into the Tri-Thien Highway 9 front.

The early spring offensive of the people and armed forces of the South struck the Americans and their puppets like a bolt from the blue, upset their strategy, and pushed them one step farther onto their strategic defensive. Ever since then, the cities, including Saigon, have become "hot" fronts. American bases, big and small, are subjected to repeated attacks. American communications, on land and water, are cut off. American and puppet defence lines are reeling under terrible blows. Even by straining to breaking point the strength of their 1,200,000 troops, the Americans have failed to check the simultaneous assaults of the people and armed forces of the South. Having thrown mobile reserves into northern Quang Tri to cope with Liberation troops' attacks there, they have sustained hard blows in Saigon-Cholon. And having withdrawn to the cities to strengthen their defences, they are facing fierce onslaughts on the outskirts and in rural areas. After moving their troops from the mountain and jungle areas to the plains, they are again repeatedly attacked in the Central Highlands, in Khe Sanh and other places.

In the hope of getting out of the morass, the Americans have scraped up troops for mobile defence. But their battle array is in disorder, their strength is on the wane, and so their mobile defence has come to grief. Evidence of this is the failure of Operations *Certain Victory*, *Complete Victory* around Saigon, *Kentucky*, *Pegasus* along Highway 9 and around Khe Sanh, *Delaware* in the A So valley, etc.

The deeper the Americans sink into their strategic defensive, the more disrupted is their battle array, and the more loopholes appear in the disposition and use of their troops. That is why although the Americans expected attacks from the people and armed forces of the South, they have none the less been caught napping and have proved impotent to thwart them. This is the inevitable result of the decline in the strength and potential of the Americans and their puppets.

4. THE MORALE OF THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY TROOPS SINKS TO A NEW LOW

THE sagging morale of the American expeditionary forces is but the inevitable product of the repeated failures of their unjust aggressive war. For a long time already the American soldiers have grown sick of the war and there have been many cases of rebellion. Nearly 300 G.I.s have sought asylum in foreign countries because they hate the war of aggression in Viet Nam. The officers, who had "cut a dash" at the beginning, have undergone great mental changes. Even high-ranking ones have shown bewilderment and doubt. Quite a few are talking more about how to set up defences and save their hides than how to launch attacks (*Sunday Star*, March 3, 1968); in general, officers and men in units around Saigon are in a state of confusion (*Reuter*, April 5).

The essential cause of this cracking morale is the ever increasing American casualties, each week being bloodier than the previous one. The rise in casualties is particularly noticeable among officers on account of repeated violent P.L.A.F. attacks on U.S. bases and command posts and the frequency of big battles.

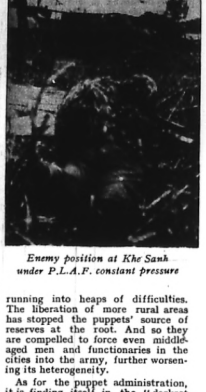
On the other hand, men and officers are bewildered and are losing heart before the spectacle of their commander-in-chief Westmoreland being sent home, their President announcing his retirement and the war going to seed (Reuter, April 4) Other reasons are the obvious failure of the war of aggression and the ever more vigorous protests voiced by the American people. The ever widening rift within the American ruling circle is also one factor accounting for the above situation.

The new state of American officers' morale reflects the heavy failure of the war of aggression, a failure acknowledged even by Johnson in spite of his propensity to lies and bluster.

5. THE HARDER THE AMERICANS TRY TO SHORE UP THEIR PUPPETS, THE QUICKER THE LATTER'S COLLAPSE.

THE Americans have been trying very hard to prop up the puppet army, to push it to the front in the hope that it would be more and more capable of shouldering the essential tasks on the battlefield and serving as a shield for G.I.s. But the harder they try, the quicker the puppets' collapse. The general offensive and uprisings in early spring knocked a big chunk off the puppet army. The simultaneous assaults this time have inflicted most heavy losses on it: a puppet paratroop task force was beaten hollow in Khe Sanh and along Highway 9; puppet rangers got a sound thrashing at Lang Vay and Kham Duc, southwest of Da Nang; cruel elements of the puppet police were severely punished in Saigon, Quang Tri, etc. The puppets have evinced such impotence that right at the beginning of the P.L.A.F. attacks, American infantry had to be called into the central part of Saigon itself.

Facing such a situation, the Americans have urged their puppets to "scrape up the barrel" and decree general mobilisation, but they are running into heaps of difficulties. The liberation of more rural areas has stopped the puppets' source of reserves at the root. And so they are compelled to force even middle-aged men and functionaries in the cities into the army, further worsening its heterogeneity.



Enemy position at Khe Sanh under P.L.A.F. constant pressure

As for the puppet administration, it is finding itself in the "darkest period ever". Its members are deeply divided among themselves, each clan trying its best to overthrow and purge its rivals, touching off endless crisis and serious decline. The collapse and disintegration of the puppet administration is taking place most dramatically. *USIS*, in a report of May 24, complained that the sad background against which "Premier" Huong is trying to form a "government" sheds blinding light on the political confusion.

The assaults and uprisings staged by the people and armed forces of the South are speeding up this process of collapse and disintegration undergone by the Saigon puppet army and administration. The Americans' neo-colonialist undertaking in South Viet Nam is falling to pieces, their prop is shaking and tumbling and will certainly collapse completely. This is the most concentrated expression of the complete failure of the Americans in all fields: military, political and diplomatic, in their neo-colonial "limited" war of aggression in South Viet Nam.

* *Provinces of Quang Tri and Thua Thien and the city of Hue.*

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See in our next issue:

RAPID GROWTH OF LIBERATION FORCES.

"AN ENTIRE NATION UP IN ARMS AGAINST IMPERIALIST AGGRESSION"

TWO Algerian journalists, Mohamed Morsli, Director of El Moudjahid, *and Zoubeir Zemzoum, Editor-in-Chief of the review* El Djeich, *visited the D.R.V.N. from May 13 to June 3, 1968. Before leaving our country, they were so kind as to receive the representatives of "Viet Nam Courier" and answer their questions:*

Question 1:

After your short stay in Viet Nam, would you please tell us your impressions, what has particularly struck you and, may be, what has completed your understanding of our country?

Answer:

What we saw here, during our 3-week visit, far surpassed the idea one usually has about the situation in friendly Viet Nam. The main facts assumed a magnitude which truly passed one's imagination.

A case in point was the mass mobilisation. It is safe to say that history has never recorded so powerful and so wide a mass movement. All Vietnamese, young and old, men and women, are alive to the imperialist peril and the absolute necessity to combat it until victory.

This mobilisation is all the more extraordinary as it embraces all activities — production, the fighting and learning, to say nothing of the artistic and literary fields in which the successes obtained are no less important.

The soldier stands in fighting trim day and night, while the worker and the peasant, the rifle within reach, buckle to giving the much remarkable impetus to the national economy. Everywhere we went, we noticed a constant development of production and we are sure that in a few years, almost all agricultural co-ops. will attain and exceed 5 tons of paddy per hectare.

Mention should also be made of the enthusiasm, sometimes moving, of the workers: many told us of the past, a past of misery and slavery, that of the revolting times which degraded human dignity, then of the priceless benefits of the Revolution. And this is an important factor, because these same workers are ready to die to the last man rather than lose the gains of their Revolution.

We have been also shocked by the large-scale destruction caused to cities and hamlets by savage U.S. bombing raids. We have seen hospitals, schools, factories and residential areas reduced to rubble. Next door to Hanoi, the small town of Phu Ly is now a ghost town. There is nothing but ruins. Was it a military target? We could not but share, wholeheartedly, the deep hatred felt by Vietnamese workers for the American imperialists, because in effect the latter have, after each raid, exasperated the Vietnamese people's emnity against them and stiffened their determination to grimly resist them until victory. Emphasis should also be laid on the full promotion of the Vietnamese woman who now plays a very important role in Viet Nam's national life.30 to 40 per cent of the economic and social activities are handled by women. Our surprise and enthusiasm reached its height when we paid a visit to the squad of militia women of Hau Loc village, Thanh Hoa province. They had brought down 2 enemy planes. Aren't comrade Moi and her very young friends themselves the vivid image of new Viet Nam, a heroic and resolute Viet Nam where President Ho Chi Minh's words: "nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" are acquiring their full meaning?

Question 2:

Certainly you have planned actions in connection with Viet Nam once back in Algeria. In our opinion, what are the possibilities to strengthen the bonds of militant friendship and solidarity between our two peoples?

Answer:

As journalists, we can affirm that the Algerian press has not ceased following with interest the struggle of the brotherly Vietnamese people, and giving them all aid within our power. Our papers have always been a militant forum at the service of the heroic fight of our brothers here against our common enemy.

So our job is simply to make heard the voice of the Algerian people, this people who, through their own history, are one in the best position to understand what suffering and misery the word "imperialism". The deep sympathy linking our two countries together and the common experience of a people's war of liberation always make it imperative for our people to support brotherly Viet Nam. It was to this effect that our visit here was undertaken, and we are sure it has thus contributed to the strengthening of this sympathy and this support duty.

However, we think it necessary to establish steadier relations at different echelons of information and culture, and to exchange experiences in various fields, for example agriculture and health. In so doing we shall only meet the wishes of our peoples who, sincerely, hold each other in deserving mutual esteem. Finally we wish to express our warm thanks to the Vietnamese comrades, workers, peasants and officials at different levels for the fraternal welcome accorded to us everywhere we went. We hope, in future to have pleasure in receiving in our country the comrades of the Vietnamese press, and to see fruitful relations established between our respective papers.

WORLD OPINION GREETS VIET NAM ALLIANCE

THE emergence of the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces has been warmly welcomed throughout the world.

The **Soviet** *paper Pravda in its May 10 issue wrote that the birth of the alliance was a political event of great significance in South Viet Nam. At present, the U.S. aggressors can rely on nobody, except a handful of officers and politicians traitors to their Fatherland. The national and democratic character of the South Vietnamese people's struggle against the barbarous U.S. aggression is irrefutable.*

In its message to the Alliance's Central Committee, the **Cuban** *Federation of Trade Union expressed its full support. It noted that the founding of the Central Committee of the Alliance with its political line of struggle against U.S. imperialism, consistent with the people's legitimate aspirations for freedom and national independence, supplied a full proof of the South Vietnamese people's determination to fight the U.S. imperialist aggressors.*

In its message to Lawyer Trinh Dinh Thao, President of the Alliance, the National Council of the Front of the **German Democratic Republic** *wrote:*

"The emergence of the Alliance which includes priests, students, writers, journalists, officers, civil servants and representatives of public opinion was a valuable contribution to the enlarging of the fighting front and to the strengthening of the combativity of the Vietnamese people."

For its part, the **Polish** *Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee expressed in its message full support for the Alliance's political line as expounded in the Alliance's National Salvation Manifesto and Programme of Action.*

The message said, "The founding of the V.N.A.N.D.P.F. was an important political event. It threw a strong light on the failure of the neo-colonialist aggressive policy of the U.S. imperialists and the total isolation and inevitable collapse of the Saigon puppet regime."

In its message of greeting, the National Council of the People's Patriotic Front of **Hungary** *said, "On behalf of the entire peace-loving people of Hungary, we salute the liberation fighters of South Viet Nam. The birth of the Alliance marked a new step in the struggle for the fundamental national rights of the South Vietnamese people."*

In a statement on May 9, the Central Committee of the Neo Lao Haksat **(Laos)** *remarked that the founding of the Alliance reflected the deep aspirations of the South Vietnamese people to build up an independent, democratic, peaceful and prosperous country, which is also the wish of all peace-loving peoples throughout the world, including the Lao people.*

VIET NAM AND THE WORLD AT LARGE

U.S. Imperialism : Saboteur of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos

TO the questions: "Who is the aggressor against Laos?" and "Who is the saboteur of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos?" the Lao people and the world peoples have this clear-cut answer ready: It is U.S. imperialism.

Only the U.S. ruling circles still deliberately make white black by means of slanders and hypocrisy. In his message to the King of Laos on May 10, 1968, President Johnson took the "commitment" that the principles laid down in the 1962 Geneva Agreements would govern the relations between the United States and Laos. At the official conversations in Paris between the D.R.V.N. and the U.S., A. Harriman, U.S. representative, impudently charged the D.R.V.N. with "violating the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos..." The U.S. ruling circles have gone the length of pretending that they are concerned with safeguarding the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos, and supporting the neutrality of Laos.

However, whatever distorting manœuvres the U.S. may resort to the truth remains the truth. It is so plain, so clear that there is no need of a magnifying glass to see it.

THE peaceful settlement of the Lao question is to be found in the following inseparable instruments:

— The international agreement reached on July 23, 1962 in Geneva of which the principal document is the declaration of neutrality made on July 9, 1962 by the Royal Government of Laos, and

— The agreements between the three parties in Laos, namely the Zurich Agreement of June 22, 1961 and the Plain of Jars Agreement of June 12, 1962.

The signatories to the 1962 Geneva Agreements including the United States solemnly recognized the fundamental national rights of the Lao people, i.e. sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity and territorial integrity, their right to live in peace and to settle their internal affairs without foreign interference.

The two key points in the settlement of the Lao question are: externally, Laos is a neutral and fully sovereign country, and internally Laos is provided with a national union government that operates on the basis of the unanimity between the three Lao parties: These two key points are indissolubly linked together, and the touchstone of international recognition of the settlement reached in Geneva in 1962 must be respect of these two points.

The 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos were a big victory for the Neo Lao Haksat and all other patriotic forces in Laos in their courageous struggle to regain independence and freedom. They were at the same time a failure of U.S. imperialism in its plot of armed intervention intended to turn Laos into a neo-colony and military base of the U.S.

RELUCTANT to give up its aggressive design against Laos, the U.S. plotted to undermine the Geneva Agreements right after their signing and has ever since prepared new aggressive plans against this country. In its systematic sabotage of the Lao settlement, the U.S. aimed first of all at the tripartite national union government. It has used its agents to undermine this government step by step and replace it by a U.S.-manipulated government in order gradually to deflect Laos from the path of peace and neutrality. On April 1st, 1963, a U.S. agent assassinated Lao Foreign Minister Quinim Pholsena, a genuine patriot representing the neutralist party in the coalition government. Then the U.S. touched off a wave of terror in Vientiane where municipal power remained in the hands of the pro-American rightwing group. Consequently, the Neo Lao Haksat ministers, then the ministers of the genuine neutralist force like Khamsouk Keola and Heuane Mongkhoulvilay, had to move out of the capital city.

On April 19, 1964 the Kouprasith ultra-reactionary group in the pay of the U.S. staged a military coup to topple completely the already crippled national union government. On this event, the International Control Commission in Laos pointed out that "it cannot but conclude that if on account of the most recent developments in Laos the national union government is overthrown and the tripartite fabric of this government is broken, this will be a blatant violation of the Geneva Agreements which endangers the objectives and goals of these agreements" (special report dated April 22, 1964 to the co-chairmen of the 1961-1962 Geneva conference). After the April 19, 1964, military putsch, to fool public opinion, the U.S. continued to retain Prince Souvanna Phouma at the premiership but simply as a figurehead. Through many "cabinet reshuffles" and separate "elections" in contravention of the principle of tripartite unanimity, the Vientiane administration has been transformed into a willing tool in the hands of the U.S.

Along with political manoeuvres to wreck the coalition government, in the middle of 1963 the U.S. ordered the army of the rightwing party to launch a major attack on the liberated area under the control of the Neo Lao Haksat. Since then the U.S. has not ceased to step up its "special war" in Laos by directly commanding the pro-American army in thousands of nibbling operations some of which involving from 6 to 20 battalions of regular troops.

On May 17, 1964 the U.S. openly committed its air force to the "Special war" in Laos. U.S. aircraft have been savagely attacking the liberated areas in Laos, committing heinous war crimes against the Lao population. That is a most cynical violation of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos.

At present there are 5,000 U.S. military personnel in Laos. U.S. news agencies make no bones that the Americans have staged a "comeback" to Laos and that this is an "open secret". In addition, the U.S. has introduced into Laos thousands of Thai and South Viet Nam military commandos. The U.S. has not withdrawn from Laos its disguised paramilitary organisations such as the U.S.A.I.D. The U.S. air companies Air America and Continental Air Services continue their air dropping of military supplies to the U.S. "special forces" in Laos, including the Meo bandits directly supported and trained by the Americans.

American military and economic "aid" to the Vientiane administration with political strings attached has been maintained in its entirety.

According to the stipulations of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos, no foreign military base or position is allowed to be established in Laos and the Lao territory must not be used for intervention in the internal affairs of other countries. Neither can the territory of any country be used to interfere in the internal affairs of Laos. However, the U.S. regards Laos as a component part in its airbase, strategic road and storage networks, and has practically transformed the area under the control of the Vientiane administration into a U.S. military base. The U.S. has used the territory of Thailand as a springboard for aggression against Laos. Since February 1965 it has taken a new, serious step by openly using the Lao airspace as flight route for Thai-based U.S. bombers to attack the D.R.V.N. In February 1966 President Johnson openly declared at the U.S. Congress that the U.S. regarded Laos as "an important link in its defence (i. e. aggressive-*Ed*) system".

The 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos have removed the "protection umbrella" of the aggressive S.E.A.T.O. military bloc over Laos and prohibited the inclusion of Laos into any military alliance. However, under the aegis of the U.S., the Vientiane administration continues to take part in secret military conferences with the U.S. henchmen in Saigon and Bangkok and in the conferences of disguised aggressive organisations set up by the U.S. like the Asian and Pacific Council (A.S.P.A.C.).

Such facts prove that the part of Laos under U.S. control has lost any qualification as a neutral country.

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ON May 25, 1968 Phoumi Vongvichit, Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Neo Lao Haksat, unmistakably stated: "The origin of the increasing tension in Laos at present lies in the intervention and aggression by the U.S., and it is the U.S. acts of sabotage that have prevented the realisation of the peaceful settlement of the Lao question agreed on in 1962. That is actually the essence of the Lao problem at present. That is why, to solve the Lao question now means to put an end to all intervention and aggression by the U.S., to end the U.S. acts of sabotage."

The Vietnamese people and the world peoples fully agree with this assessment of the situation by the Neo Lao Haksat, fully support the legitimate struggle of the Lao people rallied around the Neo Lao Haksat, for a peaceful, neutral, independent, unified and prosperous Laos.

A guerilla unit in Xieng Khouang province

TWO CRIMINAL ACTS OF THAILAND AUTHORITIES

THE spokesman of the Foreign Ministry of the D.R.V.N. issued on June 2 a statement strongly protesting against the planned dispatch, as announced by Thai Prime-Minister Thanom Kittikachorn and reported by *Reuter*, of 5,000 additional Thai combat troops to South Viet Nam at the urgent request of U.S. President Johnson.

The statement said: "This is a new, very brazen act of the reactionary Thanom-Praphas clique. For a long time now they have been selling out the sovereignty of their country and the honour of their nation, letting U.S. troops occupy Thailand and use her territory to carry out aggression against Viet Nam and other countries in Indo-China and forcing Thai youths to serve as cannon fodder for the U.S. imperialists in South Viet Nam.

The dispatch of 5,000 additional Thai troops to South Viet Nam proves the increasing collusion between the Thanom-Praphas clique with the U.S. aggressors in Viet Nam. It also shows that the Johnson Administration, though having to send its representative to the Paris talks with the D.R.V.N. representative, is still stubbornly intensifying the war in South Viet Nam."

RECENTLY, the Thailand government has agreed with the Saigon puppet administration to coerce 90 Vietnamese residing in Thailand to go back to South Viet Nam. The Vietnamese people are highly indignant at these criminal acts of the Thailand reactionary authorities. The spokesmen of the D.R.V.N. Foreign Ministry and Red Cross have many a time made it clear that the Thailand authorities' decision to force Vietnamese residents to go back to South Viet Nam violates international law and brazenly flouts the August 14, 1959 agreements on repatriation of Vietnamese residents and the protocol of the negotiations signed on September 8, 1965 by Red Cross representatives of both countries. These two documents clearly stipulate that the Thailand authorities must respect the sacred aspirations of Vietnamese residents who wish to return to North Viet Nam, see to the safety of their lives and property, guarantee their free movement and other democratic liberties pending their repatriation.

The Vietnamese people strongly protest against this illegal and inhuman move of the Thailand authorities and demand that they cancel forthwith their project of forcibly sending Vietnamese residents back to South Viet Nam, stop all repressive measures against Vietnamese living in Thailand and abide by agreements between both parties regarding the status of these residents.

In South Viet Nam Liberated Areas

DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

PARALLEL with the successful concerted attacks and uprisings launched by the people and armed forces in South Viet Nam, agricultural production also achieved good results. From Nam Bo to the provinces of Central Trung Bo and the Western High Plateaux, in the previously liberated areas as well as in newly liberated ones, inspired by the political programme of the Front, our peasants zealously buckle down to production to cater for the needs of the front and improve the people's living conditions.

It is quite difficult to understand how life in the countryside is going on unabated and even with redoubled vigour while tens of thousands of bombs are released and thousands of tons of toxic chemicals sprayed everyday on crops and vegetation.

At the congress of agricultural emulation fighters in West Nam Bo held from May 12 to 15, 1968, the summing up of the agricultural situation in 1967 showed an increase of 40,000 hectares of cropland over 1966 and the doubling of the acreage of two-crop fields (Can Tho province has wellnigh trebled in this regard). This gave a partial picture of the tremendous effort of the peasants on the agricultural front.

Six villages in Can Duoc district, Long An province, had to fight with the enemy to be able to grow rice in the "white zone". Farmers in My Tho province did their best to harvest ahead of time 50,000 hectares of the summer-autumn crop and to complete the caching of provision. Gia Lai province has planted greater quantities of cassava-roots and sweet potatoes, increased the number of crops and sowed 800 kgs of seeds of the third-month rice. Besides, many villages, districts and provinces have dug ditches or done other irrigation works. The districts of Chau Thanh, Can Duoc, Can Giuoc, Tan Tru, in Long An province, have built hundred of kilometres of irrigation canals and hundreds of dykes to protect farmland against seawater and store fresh water for 8,000 hectares of one-crop fields to become two-crop fields. Ca Mau province has dug new irrigation ditches and strengthened the old ones on hundreds of kilometres; more particularly it has embanked 26km of dykes around U Minh forest to keep the water out. In the districts of Long My and O Mon, Can Tho province, 40,000 hectares of land have been ploughed and great amounts of litter stored as manure for the next crop.

Animal husbandry has also made headway. In Long An province, new fish-rearing ponds have been dug. In the first three months of the year, My Tho province boasted 60,000 pigs, 100,800 ducks and chicken and 4,800 new fish-rearing covered ponds.

To meet the ever growing needs of the country people, handicrafts have been widely expanded: cotton and silk weaving, cane sugar, and fish sauce production, mat plaiting in Ben Tre province: wooden boat building, rice-mill making in Tra Vinh province. More oil extracting, and sugar mills, looms, forges have been opened in the Western High Plateaux.

NEEDS keep increasing with every passing day because great numbers of youths have joined the Liberation army, regional units, guerilla and logistical services, millions of country folk have taken part in political actions sometimes for many days running or served the front. This shortage of manpower for production understandably calls for an expansion of work exchange-teams and the co-operation movement. There are in West Nam Bo nearly 2,000 such teams with a 30,000 membership. My Tho province alone has 30 teams and 5,000 members and the movement is now growing everywhere in the liberated areas. In the Western High Plateaux it draws 80 per cent of the toiling people and leads the peasantry on to the collective path. In many regions, nomadic farming has given place to sedentary farming and intensive cultivation and multiplication of crops have been applied. Famine has been liquidated in the main; many villages have obtained a per capita yield of 450 kg of starch and some areas 800 kg.

Women have become a decisive factor in production. In Quang Nam and Quang Ngai provinces there are up to 15,000 women capable of replacing men in all production work including ploughing and sea-fishing. Brilliant examples have been recorded in mutual assistance. Relief was given in Ca Mau province to the tune of 22 tons of paddy and over one million piastres (South Viet Nam currency) whereas 206 tons of paddy and over 3 million piastres were granted as loan to needy people.

INCREASED production has made possible a greater contribution from our peasantry to the anti-U.S. resistance. In Ca Mau, over the last few months they have voluntarily paid additional Resistance taxes to per cent above norm. In two villages of that province 14 families of P.L.A.F. fighters have paid twice. In Ben Tre province in the first ten days of February 1968, such exemplary villages as P.T. contributed 160,000 piastres, and B., 760,000 piastres, or 15 times the amount collected at the end of 1967. Many villages of Mo Cay district still under enemy control also sent to the Resistance up to 780,000 piastres within 5 days ending April 10, 1968. The tax-paying emulation drive is gaining momentum in the provinces of An Giang, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai and Binh Thuan. Many regions have virtually discharged their fiscal obligations for 1968. The attitude of South Viet Nam people toward taxes is reflected in the following declaration made by a peasant of a hamlet on the bank of the Eastern Vam Co River: "Our children who join the army are in fact entrusted by us with the mission of fighting the U.S. aggressors to liberate ourselves. We must see to it that they are well fed. This is the duty of the rear toward the front in this decisive stage of the war."

THE great mettle displayed by the people in production in the days of widespread attacks and uprisings is an assurance that the ever growing food requirements will be satisfied.

ASSAULT ON BUNKER'S BUNKER

(*Continued from page 8*)

any exchanges of fire: perhaps the police and patrols had seen the attackers and had simply shown a clean pair of heels.

Minutes later, almost at the same time as the onslaught was launched on the puppet "Independence Palace" and the building of *Radio Saigon*, a tempest of fire swooped down on the American Embassy, sending skyward debris of barbed wire, steel door panels and American guards.

It took the attackers less than a minute to break through the gate and overrun the place. It was 2.30 in the morning, January 31, 1968.

The whole of Saigon was aflame. Thunder rumbled over the whole city. The revolutionary troops' artillery shook doors and windows. Each leading a spearhead, Ba and Ut dashed upstairs. The American bandits had not quite awakened from their sleep. Some bewilderingly opened their doors and were shot dead. Others ran about screaming like madmen. It was too late for them. Our submachineguns mowed them down after room shook, filled with streaks of fire. The only thing the enemy could do was to cower under the blows.

Suddenly Ba shouted: "Duc, don't waste your ammunition, we'll have to make it last until to-morrow, until the day after tomorrow!"

The answer came, a young boy's voice, amidst the booms of satchel charges: "But Comrade, those bastards tried to resist!"

As floor after floor was captured, the fighting became harder and harder. Entrenched in their rooms, the Americans opposed a desperate resistance. Helicopters skimmed the terraced roof, with blinking red lights under their bellies. Down in the streets, the rumbling of armoured cars was approaching.

Dawn came as they reached the fifth floor. In the morning mist, below them, windows and roofs appeared. Guns were still clattering Independence Palace was the scene of artillery fire continued unabated. How beautiful, how heroic, fighting Saigon looked!

The fight had entered a new phase in which the revolutionary troops were at the same time continuing their offensive and countering enemy attacks from two sides. They had suffered practically no losses. A few comrades, who had been wounded, had dressed their wounds and gone on fighting. How happy they all were to fight in broad daylight and look at each other's beaming faces. No one felt hungry and tired after several hours of hard fighting.

Ut cried from an upper floor: "Duong, where is Sister Sau?"

"She is with Thanh: perhaps they are holding the floor below."

Ba ordered the final assault on the last two floors. His entire body was black with gunpowder, and his deep-set eyes looked even more sunken. But he was happy! Meeting Ut, he told him: "News of our victory has probably spread all over the South. All our compatriots' eyes are probably turned on this building where we are fighting. Hurrah! We won't let that old fox Bunker escape!"

Two hours later, he learnt about Duc's death. Clenching his teeth, he hurled a satchel charge, his fifth, at a group of resisting Americans.

This was the way in which they had fought. They had killer 200 enemy personnel, most of them holding key posts in the American ruling machinery in Saigon; they had captured the lair of the Governor General Bunker, and, entrenched in it, had beaten back all enemy counter-attacks. They were standing on the highest point in Saigon, red cloth-bands on their arms, holding firm the hot barrels of their guns, ready to defend the Revolution, to protect the lives of their dear ones, to sacrifice their own lives...

Only on the afternoon of the following day, February 1, 1968, did the guns fall silent inside the American embassy. The detachment had quietly withdrawn, after raining hard blows on the enemy for two days and nights.

February 1968

NEW FILMS FOR PEACE

1. Interview with Noam Chomsky on Resistance, 7 minutes.
2. No game, a documentary on the Oct. 21-22 Pentagon Confrontation, 17 min.
3. The Enterprise Four, interviews with four U.S. sailors who deserted the U.S.S. Carrier Enterprise while in Japan because of their opposition to the war in Viet Nam, 17 min.
4. The Jeanette Rankin Brigade, 8 min.
5. Demonstration during the N. Y. garbage strike, 12 min.

For more information and orders, contact **NEWSREEL,** *Box 302, Canal St Station, New York, N.Y.* 10013.

ON THE LARGE SOUTHERN FRONT

Military Operations

IN this week, two sectors are in the limelight, although the P.L.A.F. continue to be active all over South Viet Nam.

THE people and armed forces of **Saigon** — a big agglomeration composed of Saigon Cholon (South West) and Gia Dinh (North-east) — attack the enemy unremittingly, inflicting heavy losses on him and depriving him of the control of vast areas within and without the city.

In **Cholon**, more than half the urban area has been taken by the people's forces. Many barricades have been erected in the streets, sealing off important cross-roads. On top of high buildings self-defence units control the main communication lines and the sky with their automatic weapons and recoilless guns. Enemy positions in Phu Lam suburb commanding the highway leading to the Mekong delta have been wiped out, policemen and puppet troops routed with heavy losses: 320 killed or wounded on May 30, a battalion and a marine company decimated on May 31, 22 vehicles including M.41 tanks destroyed on May 28, etc. Panic-stricken, the enemy bombed and strafed the city frenziedly, causing heavy civilian casualties and great damage. On June 2, a dozen puppet high-ranking officers including 6 colonels and lieutenant-colonels, were killed or wounded by rockets fired by an American plane.

In the suburb northeast of Saigon, fierce fighting took place in Binh Hoa area, north of Gia Dinh. The P.L.A.F. still control many strategic cross-roads and Bang Ki bridge, and threaten Binh Loi railway bridge on the roads to Bien Hoa and Thu Dau Mot. On May 24 and 25, 240 puppet marines were killed or wounded and from May 27 to 31, 600 others were put out of action. On June 2, many tanks and armoured cars were destroyed or burnt near Binh Loi bridge, 1 km from the botanical garden. The inhabitants could see U.S. planes and choppers crash in flames over the city. Enemy efforts to kick the revolutionary forces out of this sector proved futile.

Fighting is still raging in **Phu Tho** race-course area, north west of the city. The P.L.A.F. made deep thrusts into enemy zones and, as reported by Wertern agencies, were seen in areas near the "presidential" palace.

P.L.A.F. artillery continue to pound at increasing frequency the enemy administrative and military organs in the 2nd, 3rd and 5th districts. Tan Son Nhat airbase and the H.Q. of the puppet Navy (May 29): 250 marines killed or wounded, 4 vessels sunk. The military harbour was shelled on June 4. The Y-shaped bridge was hard hit on June 6. Five of the eight districts of Saigon have slipped out totally or partially of the enemy away. Western agencies pointed to the continual reinforcements of the P.L.A.F. in the city.

Around Saigon, repeated P.L.A.F. attacks were launched on May 25, 26 and 27 against Dong Tram, near Tan Uyen, north of Bien Hoa U.S. army corps H.Q.: 1 battalion and 2 infantry companies, 2 artillery companies and 1 armoured company of the U.S. were put out of action with losses amounting to 900 G.I.s killed or wounded, 42 vehicles destroyed or damaged, 8 106 mm mortars destroyed and 2 helicopters downed. The Thailand mercenaries had a company badly mauled on May 22 near Bien Hoa; the survivors fleeing in confusion were mown down by puppet troops stationed nearby who feared that their flight would draw the fire of the P.L.A.F. on them.

In Trang Bang region (50 km north west of Saigon) a U.S. operation, begun on May 13, ended on May 23 in a complete fiasco: 1,200 G.I.s put out of action, 215 armoured vehicles and 7 cannons and mortars destroyed.

Giai Phong Press Agency has just released the May balance sheet of P.L.A.F. operations in Saigon and the periphery: *28,000 enemy troops killed or wounded, 1,000 military vehicles and 300 aircraft destroyed, downed or damaged.*

In the Mekong delta, according to latest reports received on the P.L.A.F. attack on May 25 and 27 against the U.S. riverine task forces on the Giong Trom river, Ben Tre province, the enemy had 38 vessels sunk or burnt and 1,500 G.I.s killed or wounded; this was one of the greatest naval disasters ever suffered by the U.S. in South Viet Nam.

At Dong Ha and **Cua Viet**, the P.L.A.F. increased their pressure on these most important U.S. bases in the sector near the 17th parallel. The P.L.A.F. infantrymen and artillerymen inflicted heavy losses on the enemy who took 1,500 casualties (mostly American) in the last five days of May.

At **Khe Sanh**, nearly 400 G.I.s were put out of action from May 26, to June 4. A U.S. logistic base in this region received on May 31 a heavy shelling which touched off a big fire. The blaze consumed for 78 hours running 300,000 litres of petrol and 28 vehicles.

Around Hue, the bases of the *First Cav.* and U.S. Para Division 101 were paralysed by relentless P.L.A.F. attacks between May 17 and 20 (including the shelling of Camp *Evans* at Dong Lam). In these 4 days, the enemy had 1,500 G.I.s killed or wounded, 178 aircraft, 150 vehicles and 25 cannons destroyed. A U.S. armoured regiment and 5 U.S. companies were decimated.

In the **Western High Plateaux**, between May 28 and 31, after violent raids on Dakto and the surrounding areas, the P.L.A.F. mounted a series of attacks on Dalat and its periphery: one battalion and one company of puppet troops were put out of action.

BALANCE SHEET OF MAY

- ★ **Enemy defence lines breached by P.L.A.F. offensive around the cities.**
- ★ **Many U.S. and puppet administrative and military organs of paramount importance attacked and paralysed.**
- ★ **Worsening of enemy's tottering political, military and economic situation.**
- ★ **Losses suffered by U.S. and puppet armies: 70,000 men put out of action (including 30,000 G.I.s and mercenaries); 1 armoured regiment (of the U.S.), 27 battalions and 150 companies decimated or wiped out; 1,100 aircraft downed, 2,200 military vehicles, 234 cannons and mortars destroyed, 120 vessels sunk, 175 depots and logistic bases set afire, trunk communication lines cut off.**
- ★ **40,000 people freed from enemy grip.**

THE SAIGON SAGA

NEW P.L.A.F. attacks against Saigon—Cholon began on May 5. They are still going on with unabated violence and are marked by the following features:

1—The P.L.A.F. strike very hard and everywhere, in all Saigon districts. Almost simultaneously, they hit at a series of targets, and co-ordination of actions inside and around Saigon is remarkable. The artillery successfully supported the infantry and seized the initiative for the P.L.A.F. at the very start.

2—Fighting continues without let up. The P.L.A.F. display great mobility, unceasingly changing the direction of attack, and combining large unit operations with small-scale activities. In this way, they sow utter confusion in the adverse camp, forcing the enemy to spread his forces thin while keeping him in the dark as to which direction the attacks will come from.

3—The P.L.A.F. hit home at the enemy mobile and elite forces, whether they are dug in or are on the way to the rescue of beleaguered positions. Whole U.S.-puppet battalions have been put out of action, many tanks and armoured cars destroyed and planes brought down in the very heart of Saigon.

—The city population closely co-ordinate their actions with the armed forces. People's uprisings take place before or simultaneously with the attacks. They take an active part in hunting down tortioners, destroying puppet power, evacuating the wounded, carrying supplies for the fighters, etc...

The new victories won by the P.L.A.F. and the Saigon-Cholon people bear a great significance. They demonstrate the accelerated weakening of the U.S.-puppet forces. Although they are well aware of the popular onslaughts, and despite strict security precautions, they are beaten black and blue. Puppet units prove useless right at the first gunshots of the P.L.A.F. They have to call in their American allies, but the G.I.'s too, turn out to be no match for the revolutionary armed forces. Their bombing of residential areas in Saigon-Cholon has only exposed their impotence and their savagery. Meanwhile, the internal dissensions among the puppet authorities at central level have worsened, and in some places the puppet administration at district level has been virtually wiped out.

As for the people's forces, the new victories provide convincing proof of their remarkable progress and capability of actions even more devastating for the enemy.

ASSAULT ON BUNKER'S BUNKER

(Excerpt from a story by the South Vietnamese writer Giang Nam about events in Saigon on January 31, 1968

SAIGON was bathed in dazzling light coming from thousands of multi-coloured neon signs. Heavy traffic rolled through its main thoroughfares. Spring had come to our beloved city with familiar colours and sounds. And yet behind each door, each tree, each lamp-post, I knew that angry eyes were watching American vehicles rumbling past: all the people of Saigon were awake and waiting with bated breath...

Even if the enemy had smelt a rat, it would have been too late for him. Over the harvested fields bristling with rice stubble, through the muddy swamps and across meandering rivers, columns of our troops were heading in silent excitement for that opaque glow over the horizon: Saigon, the whole of South Viet Nam was joining battle.

Comrade Ba ordered a final check-up of weapons and equipment. We put on the beloved red armbands of the Saigon revolutionary troops. The women tied their hair into knots and tightened their cartridge-belts. One heard the smothered noise of talk and laughter...

Just before zero hour, an extraordinary silence fell over Saigon. We felt quite confident of victory: the same thought was foremost in the minds of all... And the offensive began.

At the head of the revolutionary detachment attacking the American Embassy was a veteran fighter of Saigon. His name was bound to the resounding victories which had struck the enemy with panic: the Kinh Do cinema, the Metropole, the Victoria Hotel, the Tan Son Nhut airfield... In the detachment there were many who had been fighting for five or seven years, but there were also some who were going to have their baptism of fire. In this important hour of national history, the Revolution had entrusted guns to them and they had accepted their tough task without hesitation.

The American Embassy was an imposing seven-storeyed building, a fortress of concrete and steel at the corner of Thong Nhut and Mac Dinh Chi avenues. Between the stockade of concrete pipes, sandbags and barbed wire entanglements, and the multicoloured glazed porch, was an 80-metre-wide courtyard covered by gunnests all around. Specially designed elevators would electrocute any users unfamiliar with their functioning.

The order for the assault was given: the whole detachment rushed forward. It was a fierce lightning attack, a complete surprise for the enemy. The outer ring of defences was breached without

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